

Farm Labor

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Work Pace Slows as Yuletide Season Approaches

The Nation's farm labor force for the week of December 18-24 totaled 3,986,000 persons--3,228,000 family workers and 758,000 hired hands. The total number of farm workers declined 5 percent from the comparable period in 1965, continuing the downtrend of recent years. This represented a decline of 18 percent from a month earlier as the pace of farm work slowed.

The family work force, which consists of farm operators and unpaid family members working on home farms, declined 6 percent from the same period in 1965. The number of hired workers was down 2 percent, from a year earlier, but the seasonal decline from a month earlier was almost one-third, about the same as in 1965.

The 1966 annual average of 5,259,000 farm workers was 6 percent below 1965 and about one-fifth lower than the 1960-64 average. Family workers for 1966 averaged 3,902,000--20 percent below the 5-year average, while the hired work force, at 1,357,000 averaged 25 percent lower. These declines reflect the increasing use of mechanical harvesters and other labor-saving devices to make more efficient use of labor on farms.

Hours per Worker Decline Seasonally

Farm workers on reporting farms worked an average of 34.5 hours during the December survey week, a seasonal decline of 2.6 hours from a month earlier. Farm operators, with an average of 35.7 hours, worked 5.9 hours less than in November 1966. Other family members averaged 33.8 hours and hired workers averaged 36.2 hours of farm work.

Farm Wage Rates Rise

The 1966 annual composite hourly rate, reflecting cash payments for all hiring arrangements, averaged \$1.03, an increase of 8 percent over 1965. Except in 1949 and 1964, wage rates have increased every year since 1940. The 1966 increase represents the largest annual advance since 1951, when an advance of 11 percent over 1950 was recorded. The annual average wage rates for 1965 and 1966 are shown by States and regions on pages 9 and 10.

The rate per hour without board or room averaged \$1.23 in 1966 - an increase of 8 percent over the previous year. Wage rates for the weekly hiring arrangements showed advances of 8 percent and monthly rates were up 9 percent from 1965.

The January 1, 1967 composite hourly rate, at \$1.14, was up 8 percent from January 1966. All reported rates are from the Department's crop and livestock reporters and represent rates paid in their localities or on their own farms. These rates represent cash payments only with no allowances for values of housing, food, or other items furnished in addition to cash wages.

Seasonal harvest in citrus areas dominates labor activities

"Dobbin" and the sleigh could have been put to good use during the week of December 18-24 with much of the United States receiving a blanket of snow for Christmas. A major storm dumped 6 to 24 inches of snow from the Ozark Mountains eastward to the southern Appalachians and northeastward to New England. Every State except Hawaii reported freezing temperatures on Christmas Day. Farm activity in most northern areas was limited to routine chores.

Most field activity took place in the South and West. Picking of citrus crops remained active in California and Arizona. The citrus harvest in Florida has been delayed some by the late maturity of fruit. The work force has been generally adequate for citrus needs so far this season. However, in the citrus areas of Florida, labor may well be a limiting factor in the utilization of the record early and mid-season orange crop. Freezing temperatures did very little damage to the Florida crop. California harvest of dates, olives, and avocados continues. Pruning of orchards and vineyards was underway in a number of States.

Harvest of vegetables continued in late-fall and winter-producing States. Planting of the California spring potato crop and spring vegetables in Florida made good progress.

Sugarcane harvest is virtually complete in Louisiana but very active in Florida. Cotton picking was nearly complete in the southern States while a number of fields were still being harvested in the desert area of California. Tobacco stripping was active in the Appalachian States and in Maryland and Delaware.

Farm employment and indexes, December 1966, with comparisons, United States

	: Annual : average : 1960-64 <u>1/</u>	: Annual : average : 1965 <u>1/</u>	: December : average : 1960-64 <u>1/</u>	: December : 19-25, : 1965	: December : 18-24, : 1966
FARM EMPLOYMENT	:	:	:	:	:
(Thousands)	:	:	:	:	:
Total	6,662	5,610	4,861	4,204	3,986
Family labor	4,862	4,128	3,979	3,434	3,228
Hired labor	1,800	1,482	882	770	758
INDEXES <u>2/</u>	:	:	:	:	:
(1910-14=100)	:	:	:	:	:
Total	49	41	48	41	39
Family labor	48	41	47	41	38
Hired labor	53	44	50	44	43
(1957-59=100)	:	:	:	:	:
Total	89	75	87	75	72
Family labor	88	75	87	75	71
Hired labor	92	76	87	77	75

1/ Employment during the last full calendar week ending at least one day before the end of the month.

2/ Monthly indexes are adjusted for seasonal variation.

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Farm Wage Rates and Indexes, January 1, 1967, United States

	: Annual : average : 1966	: January : average : 1961-65	: January : 1, 1966	: January 1, : 1967
FARM WAGE RATES	:	:	:	:
Composite rate per hour <u>1/</u>	\$ 1.03	\$ 0.952	\$ 1.06	\$ 1.14
Per month with house	243	206	228	249
Per month with board and room ...	185	162	178	193
Per week with board and room	43.50	36.50	40.50	44.00
Per week without board or room ..	55.75	48.00	51.25	55.50
Per day with house	6.70	5.80	6.80	7.20
Per day with board and room	8.00	6.70	7.40	8.00
Per day without board or room ...	8.20	6.90	7.70	8.40
Per hour with house	1.10	.88	.97	1.04
Per hour without board or room ..	1.23	1.13	1.24	1.33
INDEXES <u>2/</u>	:	:	:	:
(1910-14=100)	792	666	738	799
(1957-59=100)	136	115	127	137

1/ Weighted average of all rates on a per hour basis.

2/ Indexes are adjusted for seasonal variation.

Farm Work: Weekly Hours Worked Per Worker

State and division	Average for reporting farms - week of December 18-24, 1966				
	Farm	Other	All	Hired	All
	Operators	Family Members <u>1/</u>	Family <u>1/</u>	Workers	Workers <u>1/</u>
	Hours	Hours	Hours	Hours	Hours
Maine	53.4	32.5	47.1	35.7	43.5
N. H.	55.7	32.9	49.3	38.8	45.9
Vt.	62.1	47.5	57.1	43.9	52.2
Mass.	55.1	31.0	47.3	40.5	44.3
R. I.	46.3	30.1	41.7	36.3	39.4
Conn.	52.4	32.8	46.8	39.5	44.1
N. Eng.	55.6	35.6	49.4	39.4	46.0
N. Y.	53.8	32.9	48.4	40.6	45.8
N. J.	38.2	33.7	37.1	36.0	36.8
Pa.	47.0	29.7	41.0	37.1	40.3
M. Atl.	49.2	31.3	43.8	38.8	42.4
Ohio	40.2	29.8	37.5	30.6	36.3
Ind.	34.7	27.2	33.2	29.0	32.5
Ill.	33.8	30.6	33.4	33.2	33.3
Mich.	42.2	32.9	39.6	34.0	38.6
Wis.	53.7	29.7	44.2	40.0	43.6
E. N. Cent.	40.7	30.0	37.4	33.7	37.1
Minn.	42.4	27.6	37.7	31.3	36.9
Iowa	42.8	30.7	39.5	30.2	38.0
Mo.	33.9	31.7	33.5	25.5	31.8
N. Dak.	31.0	28.6	30.3	28.4	30.1
S. Dak.	39.8	31.7	37.8	28.0	36.8
Nebr.	39.5	30.9	37.5	28.5	36.4
Kans.	35.8	29.3	34.2	31.8	33.9
W. N. Cent.	38.6	30.1	36.2	28.8	35.3
Del.	30.9	38.2	32.9	29.8	32.2
Md.	36.6	30.4	34.9	37.5	35.7
Va.	32.9	26.6	31.6	33.0	32.0
W. Va.	33.7	25.8	32.0	28.2	31.2
N. C.	29.1	26.4	28.5	29.6	28.9
S. C.	30.4	26.0	29.2	24.8	27.2
Ga.	30.7	29.5	30.4	30.9	30.6
Fla.	33.0	46.0	34.6	43.7	41.6
S. Atl.	31.1	28.6	30.4	36.9	32.3
Ky.	33.6	29.8	32.7	27.7	30.7
Tenn.	28.0	19.2	25.5	25.9	25.6
Ala.	22.0	29.0	23.2	22.6	23.0
Miss.	30.4	25.7	29.2	23.8	26.7
E. S. Cent.	28.9	25.6	27.8	25.3	27.0
Ark.	27.3	30.2	27.8	22.9	26.1
La.	29.4	25.6	28.6	29.6	29.0
Okla.	32.2	29.9	31.7	29.2	31.4
Texas	30.5	29.3	30.3	36.5	32.4
W. S. Cent.	30.1	29.0	29.9	32.4	30.5
Mont.	34.5	32.4	34.0	39.1	35.0
Idaho	34.8	26.5	32.6	39.8	33.8
Wyo.	40.5	33.0	37.7	36.0	37.2
Colo.	35.1	27.8	33.2	39.8	34.5
N. Mex.	36.7	35.0	36.3	39.0	37.3
Ariz.	45.8	35.4	43.0	42.7	42.8
Utah	33.6	27.4	31.8	28.3	31.1
Nev.	44.1	28.9	40.1	30.9	35.8
Mount.	35.9	29.8	34.2	40.4	36.2
Wash.	30.0	29.5	29.9	33.9	31.2
Oreg.	34.6	30.6	33.8	31.6	33.2
Calif.	38.1	34.9	37.4	44.5	42.8
Pac.	35.0	32.4	34.4	43.1	39.5
U. S.	35.7	29.3	33.8	36.2	34.5

1/ Includes as "other family" only those farm household members working 15 hours or more per week without receiving cash wages.

Farm Wage Rates, January 1, 1966 1/

Table with columns: State and division, Per month (With house, With board and room), Per week (With board, Without board), Per day (With house, With board and room), Per hour (With house, Without board), Composite rate, Indexes of composite rates (1910-14=100). Rows list various states including Maine, N. H., Vt., Mass., R. I., Conn., N. Eng., N. Y., N. J., Pa., M. Atl., Ohio, Ind., Ill., Mich., Wis., E. N. Cent., Minn., Iowa, Mo., N. Dak., S. Dak., Nebr., Kans., W. N. Cent., Del., Md., Va., W. Va., N. C., S. C., Ga., Fla., S. Atl., Ky., Tenn., Ala., Miss., E. S. Cent., Ark., La., Okla., Texas, W. S. Cent., Mont., Idaho, Wyo., Colo., N. Mex., Ariz., Utah, Nev., Mount., Wash., Oreg., Calif., Pac., and U. S.

1/ Average rates paid on crop and livestock reporters' farms or in their localities for arrangements specified above. U.S. averages and State composite rates include estimates for unpublished State rates of small importance.
2/ Adjusted for seasonal variation.

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